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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

September 28, 2005

Director Robert Latham
The Mississippi Emergency Management Agency
1410 Riverside Drive
Jackson, Mississippi 39202

Dear Director Latham:

Pursuant to its authority under Rule XXV(k)(1) of the Standing Rules of the Senate, Section 101 of S. Res 445 (108th Congress), and Section 11(e) of S. Res 50 (109th Congress), the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs has initiated an investigation into the Nation's preparedness for, and response to, Hurricane Katrina. To aid in this investigation, we respectfully request that the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) provide the Committee (in accordance with the attached definitions and instructions) with the information and documents requested below.

We are both very aware of Mississippi's continued efforts to respond to the destruction of Hurricane Katrina. In fact, we have spent time in the affected areas of the Gulf, and have seen first hand the devastation caused by the hurricane and the efforts currently underway to recover. As noted above, we are making the following requests for information and documents as part of the Committee's investigation into the Nation's preparedness for, and response to, Hurricane Katrina. It is important that such an investigation get underway; however, we do recognize the demands on your time and resources at this critical juncture of recovery. Therefore, we respectfully request that MEMA provide the Committee with the following information and documents:

1. Organization charts of MEMA and of each component of MEMA involved in the response to Hurricane Katrina. Identify the individual(s) who hold or held each key position from August 23, 2005 to the present;
2. Please describe MEMA's roles, responsibilities, statutory authorities, and relationships to other Mississippi State agencies and/or departments with emergency preparedness and response roles in preparing for and responding to catastrophic incidents. Please provide a list of those Emergency Support Functions activated and a detailed chronology of their activation in connection with Hurricane Katrina;
3. All operative Mississippi State, county, and/or local emergency plan(s) as of August 23, 2005, for Mississippi and all documents that refer or relate to such plan(s), including:

- a. All implementation procedures for all Emergency Action Levels, referenced in the Mississippi State, county and/or local emergency plan(s);
 - b. All plans, procedures, resource inventories, and notification lists within the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC);
 - c. All annexes, appendices, procedures, resource inventories, and notification/recall lists of the State and/or local emergency plan(s);
 - d. All documents that refer or relate to any State and/or local continuity of operations plans;
 - e. All documents that refer or relate to the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA's) review, consideration, or approval of such State and/or local emergency plan(s); and
 - f. All documents that refer or relate to agencies with primary and/or supporting Emergency Support Functions (ESF), including implementation procedures, plans, arrangements and agreements for those departments, agencies, and offices.
4. Within the context of the State emergency plan(s), identify the State and local agencies or offices involved in the response to Katrina. For each agency or office, describe the role that it plays in the State emergency plan(s) and identify key officials within each agency or office who participated;
5. Identify and provide copies of all authorities, regulations, procedures, policies, and operating guidance related to MEMA's ability to act or task, assign missions to, or seek assistance from other entities or organizations, including, but not limited to, any other State or Federal agency, in responding to an emergency or major disaster. Provide all documents that refer or relate to any such acts, tasks, requests, or mission assignments by MEMA in connection with Hurricane Katrina;
6. All documents that refer or relate to the establishment of any internal state organizational structure or Federal/State organizational structure, including joint field offices, following the Mississippi Governor's or the President's declarations of emergency or major disaster in response to Hurricane Katrina. Please provide an organizational chart of such structure(s) and identify the individual(s) who hold or held each key position in such organizational structure(s) from August 23, 2005, to the present;
7. Identify by name, title, and responsibilities all key State personnel with responsibility for emergency preparedness and response who have not already been identified in response to a previous item;
8. Please produce all documents from the past five years that evaluate, assess, or describe, in any way, the risks posed to the State of Mississippi by a hurricane, including, but not limited to, documents that relate to the knowledge of such risks held by Federal, State, or local officials prior to the landfall of Hurricane Katrina;

9. All documents from the past five years that refer or relate to any planning or exercises conducted to respond to a hurricane scenario in Mississippi;
10. Please produce copies of all after-action reports or other assessments for Hurricanes Ivan, Georges, Andrew, Camille, and Betsy, and those prepared over the past five years under the direction of, or under contract through, MEMA assessing the performance of MEMA and its elements, personnel, or programs in response to catastrophic incidents, including but not limited to, previous hurricanes;
11. All documents that refer or relate to hazard mitigation arising from hurricanes and floods in Mississippi for the past five years, including, but not limited to, documents arising from hurricanes and floods that refer or relate to hazard mitigation programs, planning, or assistance under sections 203, 322, or 404 of the Stafford Act;
12. Please identify, and provide copies of, all requests to and grants for emergency preparedness funding and/or assistance received by MEMA from the Federal government, including but not limited to FEMA and/or the Department of Homeland Security, over the past five years, as well as all annual plans, reports or evaluations received or prepared by MEMA concerning these requests;
13. Any MEMA budgets or audit reports for the past five years;
14. Identify any individual(s) appointed as State Coordinating Officer and Governor's Authorized Representative for the emergencies and major disasters declared for Hurricane Katrina in Mississippi. Provide all documents within the possession or control of MEMA that refer or relate to these individual(s) from August 23, 2005 through September 6, 2005;
15. Within the universe of documents created between the dates of August 23, 2005, and September 6, 2005, and which refer or relate to Hurricane Katrina, please produce:
 - a. All documents that refer or relate to declarations of emergency or major disaster under the Stafford Act for Hurricane Katrina, including, but not limited to, gubernatorial requests for such declarations, any internal MEMA consideration, analysis and recommendations regarding declaration requests, and FEMA-Mississippi agreements executed pursuant to the declarations and any amendments to such agreements;
 - b. All weather reports and maps created, obtained, or used by MEMA;
 - c. All communications between MEMA and (1) the Federal government, including but not limited to, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and (2) any other Mississippi State, county, and/or local emergency agencies or departments, including, but not limited to, any requests by MEMA for Federal assistance in preparation for, or in response to, Hurricane Katrina;

- d. All communications, between MEMA and any State office, department or agency (other than the State of Mississippi), including but not limited to, any requests by MEMA for State assistance in preparation for, or in response to, Hurricane Katrina; and
- e. All notes, recordings, videotapes and any other documents from meetings, teleconferences, or video-conferences;

16. Identify all contractors or subcontractors to MEMA that assisted in responding to Hurricane Katrina between the dates of August 23, 2005, and September 6, 2005, and provide a detailed description of their activities undertaken on behalf of MEMA;

17. Please provide a detailed description of how and when MEMA was first informed that it would have to take action to prepare for and respond to Katrina. Please be specific as to dates, times, and personnel involved;

18. Please provide a detailed chronology and description of all evacuations coordinated by the State and/or MEMA relating to Hurricane Katrina, including who ordered the evacuations, where evacuees were evacuated to, and under what authority such evacuations were ordered and carried out. Please provide copies of all State evacuation orders;

19. To the extent not already provided in the responses to previous questions and requests, please identify and describe all actions taken by MEMA in preparation for Hurricane Katrina, starting on August 23, 2005, and continuing through landfall on the Gulf Coast;

20. Please describe all MEMA's actions taken between the dates of August 23, 2005, and September 6, 2005, to ensure that adequate and interoperable emergency communications capability would be available to government officials, first responders, and others involved in the response to Hurricane Katrina. Please be specific as to dates, times, and personnel involved;

21. All MEMA documents, from August 23, 2005, to September 6, 2005, referring or relating to emergency communications in the areas affected by, or expected to be affected by, Hurricane Katrina, including, but not limited to, requests for assistance with communications and plans to address communications failures;

22. Please identify all key MEMA personnel with responsibility for emergency and interoperable communications in the areas affected by, or expected to be affected by, Hurricane Katrina;

23. All documents, from August 23, 2005, to September 6, 2005, constituting, referring or relating to communications between MEMA personnel and Federal, State, or local officials or first responders, or with others in the private or nonprofit sectors, regarding assistance or offers of assistance relating to Hurricane Katrina;

24. All documents, from August 23, 2005, to September 6, 2005, constituting, referring or relating to communications between MEMA personnel and Federal, State, or local officials or

first responders, or with others in the private or nonprofit sectors, regarding the failure or inadequacy of emergency communications; and

25. Describe the command staff responsible for the response to Hurricane Katrina, including how this command staff complied, or failed to comply, with the principles set forth in NIMS. Was the command a unified command? If not, what was it? Identify all individuals within the command. Please explain in detail how the command exercised control over each aspect of the response.

We request that these documents and information be provided as they become available but no later than October 27, 2005. If you or your staff have any questions concerning this request please contact David Porter of the Committee's majority staff at 202-224-4751 or Josh Levy of the Committee's minority staff at 202-224-2627.

We thank you and your staff in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,



Susan M. Collins
Chairman



Joseph I. Lieberman
Ranking Member

CC: Governor Haley Barbour